

Protocol agreed to reopen French border to UK arrivals

An agreement to reopen the UK-French border to allow accompanied freight services and some passenger services to resume between the two countries has been reached by the UK and French governments this evening (22 December 2020).

Rail, air and sea services will resume tomorrow morning, with all people travelling from the UK into France required to show proof of a negative Coronavirus test taken within the previous 72 hours.

The protocol agreed with the French Government will be reviewed on 31 December, but could run until 6 January. All lorry drivers, irrespective of nationality, will require a lateral flow test.

This can detect the new strain of COVID-19 and provide results in around 30 minutes, rather than the 24 hours required after a PCR test.

The French government will also carry out sample testing on incoming freight to the UK.

The UK government continues to strongly urge hauliers not to travel to Kent until further notice, while a mass testing programme for HGV drivers gets underway to alleviate congestion at ports.

Operation Stack remains in force along the M20 while lorry drivers in Kent are continuing to be directed to the Manston holding facility, where they have access to food and welfare facilities.

Under the agreement announced this evening, admittance into France will only be granted to those travelling for urgent reasons – including hauliers – French citizens, and British citizens with French residency.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

I am pleased that we have made this important progress with our French counterparts this evening. This protocol will see the French border reopen to those travelling for urgent reasons, provided they have a certified negative COVID test.

We continue to urge hauliers not to travel to Kent until further notice as we work to alleviate congestion at ports.

The Transport Secretary also announced the [temporary relaxation of drivers' hours for hauliers](#) to help drivers get through UK borders safely, including

via Kent, during the coming weeks. The rules will come in force from midnight tonight.

British–Croatian Fellowship Programme **Climate Change and COP26**

The British Embassy in Zagreb is delighted to announce the third round of its Fellowship Programme, a four week online educational programme for future Croatian decision makers.

The purpose of this year's programme is to learn about the UK's policies on tackling Climate Change, exchange experiences, as well as to create partnerships between the two countries, in the run up to COP26 Climate Conference to be held in Glasgow in November next year.

The programme is designed for individuals working on climate change issues for the Croatian government, NGOs, or Croatian businesses.

We aim for the programme to create opportunities for future cooperation, as well as potential collaboration in a series of climate related events throughout 2021.

The programme will be comprised of four weekly half-day sessions, organised via Zoom, on a targeted set of topics, with participation of UK experts on climate change. The sessions will be dedicated to tackling climate change and driving climate action, developing initiatives that reduce carbon footprint, drive progress in areas of transport and nature and promote green technology expertise in business and trade.

Read the outline of programme of activities in the document below, which was jointly created by British Embassy in Zagreb and [DODS Group](#), our partner for this project.

The programme will take place from 26 January to 16 February 2021 and will recruit a total of 12 representatives from Croatia.

Candidates should fit the following profile:

- representative of Croatian government, Croatian registered NGO or a Croatian registered business with a proven experience of dealing with climate change topics, green recovery or green solutions
- a good working level of English that would enable a candidate to follow the programme and actively participate in discussions

- a strong CV that shows leadership potential and previous experience in climate change topics

All candidates with an intention to apply must participate in all four dedicated sessions to obtain a certificate.

Application should include a CV and covering letter and be sent to Monika.Suknaic@fcdo.gov.uk by Monday, 11 January 2021.

For any further information about the programme and the recruitment process, please contact Ms Suknaic by email.

UK and Canada agree temporary measures for goods exporters

Press release

The UK and Canada have agreed transitional measures to maintain the flow of goods between our countries from January 1



The UK and Canada have today (Tuesday 22 December) agreed transitional measures to maintain the flow of goods between our countries from January 1.

These temporary arrangements will be in place until the UK-Canada Trade Continuity Agreement (TCA) is approved by the Canadian and UK Parliaments early next year.

The UK and Canada have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that ensures:

- Tariff-free trade is maintained for UK and Canadian businesses exporting goods eligible for preferential treatment under the TCA
- Access to Tariff Rate Quotas is maintained for products covered in the TCA

- Rules of Origin that enable EU content and processing to count as originating in the UK as set out in the TCA

In addition, the UK and Canada are finalising arrangements to maintain shared recognition rules on compliance of good manufacturing practices (GMP) for pharmaceutical products, and to provide continuity in regard to the mutual acceptance of the results of conformity assessment for radio and telecommunications terminal equipment and Electromagnetic compatibility. The final arrangements will be published [here](#).

We will work with UK businesses to provide clear guidance on the arrangements for 1 January and on any temporary changes that may have an impact on them between 1 January and the TCA coming into force in early 2021.

Notes to Editors

- Total trade between the UK and Canada was worth £19.9 billion in the four quarters to end of Q1 2020, of which £11.5 billion was trade in goods.
- These temporary measures will be maintained until the UK-Canada Trade Continuity Agreement comes into force or is provisionally applied.
- Detailed business guidance will be uploaded on GOV.UK shortly. This will be found [here](#).

Published 22 December 2020

Restating commitment to the JCPOA

Thank you, Mr President. I would like to start by joining others in welcoming the Secretary-General's tenth report on implementation of resolution 2231. I thank the Secretariat too for their continued professionalism and the support they provide to the Secretary-General in enabling production of this report. I would also like to thank Belgium for their role as 2231 Facilitator and for the latest Facilitator's report.

The UK remains resolutely committed to the JCPOA. We have frequently stated our unequivocal regret and concern at the US decision to leave the agreement and to re-impose sanctions on Iran. We understand the continued impact this has had in Iran and on the Iranian people. The Joint Statement by the JCPOA's remaining participants at yesterday's Ministerial Joint Commission meeting is the most recent expression of our commitment.

Since May 2018, we have worked tirelessly to preserve the JCPOA and have fully upheld our commitments. We have taken on the role of co-chair of the Arak Modernisation Project in order to bring about a proliferation-resistant facility, and we have developed INSTEX, which is ready to play an important

role supporting legitimate trade with Iran. Recent Iranian criticism of the E3's approach is therefore regrettable.

It is also to our deep regret that since 2019, Iran has taken nuclear measures contrary to its JCPOA commitments. As the Secretary-General's report notes, the IAEA has confirmed that Iran has continued to install cascades of IR-2M centrifuges at Natanz and to expand its uranium enrichment programme and stockpile beyond the limits of the JCPOA. These actions seriously undermine the non-proliferation benefits of the agreement.

Along with our French and German colleagues, we are also deeply worried by Iran's recent announcement that it intends to install three cascades of advanced centrifuges at Natanz, and at the recent law passed by the Iranian Parliament, which – if implemented – would substantially expand Iran's nuclear programme and limit IAEA monitoring access. These measures would be incompatible with the JCPOA and Iran's wider nuclear commitments.

I would like to take the opportunity to welcome the Secretary-General's recognition in his report of the vital role of the IAEA, whose monitoring and verification is essential to securing international confidence in the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme.

Mr President, while recognising Iran has not conducted any test launches in the reporting period, we remain concerned by Iran's development of advanced ballistic missile technologies. We note Iran's announcements in August of two new ballistic missile systems, and in November of a missile system capable of multiple launches located in an underground facility.

The 2231 Secretariat has an important and ongoing role monitoring and reporting on the restrictions on Iran's ballistic missile programme that remain in place under Annex B of resolution 2231. The UK therefore opposes any proposal in the 5th Committee that aims to reduce the 2231 budget beyond that recommended by the Secretary-General.

This year has seen a continuation of Iran's destabilising activity around the Middle East. We are concerned by the Secretariat's findings on imagery of four anti-tank guided missiles in Libya, one of which has been found to be consistent with weaponry manufactured in Iran.

There is also broader evidence of continued Iranian transfer of missiles to armed groups, including the Houthis in Yemen, in violation of several UNSC resolutions, including UNSC resolutions 2216 and 1540. Such proliferation is destabilising for the region and escalates already high tensions; it should stop.

The circumstances of Iranian nuclear scientist Mohsen Fakhrizadeh's death remain unclear. To date no State or non-State actors have claimed responsibility, but the UK has repeatedly and consistently condemned extrajudicial killings whenever and wherever they take place. Iran is no exception to this.

I would like to conclude by reiterating our concern at current tensions

across the region. Escalation would be in no one's interest. We once again welcome agreement of a Joint Statement by the JCPOA's remaining participants at yesterday's Ministerial Joint Commission meeting.

We hope next year will see the US re-join the JCPOA and Iran return to compliance with the agreement. A return to diplomacy represents the best means of bringing greater security to the region, upholding the nuclear non-proliferation regime and preventing Iran from developing a nuclear weapon.

Finally, Mr President, although I am recently arrived and the newest member of the Security Council, may I take the opportunity to thank all colleagues for their warm welcome and join those paying tribute to our departing colleagues from Belgium, South Africa, the Dominican Republic, Germany and Indonesia. As Shakespeare says, "Parting is such sweet sorrow." I look forward to continuing to work with all of you.

Thank you.

New interim Chief Regulator of Ofqual

Press release

Simon Lebus appointed interim Chief Regulator of Ofqual, replacing Dame Glenys Stacey



Simon Lebus has been appointed as interim Chief Regulator of Ofqual, replacing Dame Glenys Stacey from 1 January 2021.

Mr Lebus will be in post up to 17 September 2021.

Dame Glenys will continue to provide support to Ofqual as Chair of a committee of the board focusing on exams and assessments in 2021.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

Simon's knowledge and experience will be vital as we work to make sure young people taking exams and qualifications in 2021 have the best possible chance to succeed.

I'd like to thank Dame Glenys for her commitment and support over the last four months as acting Chief Regulator, in particular regarding the exceptional measures that have been put in place for exams next year. I am grateful to her for agreeing to continue to support work on exams from January, as Chair of the 2021 committee of Ofqual's board.

Mr Lebus has worked in the education sector since 2002, most notably as Chief Executive of Cambridge Assessment between 2002 and 2018. He now has a non-executive portfolio.

Ian Bauckham CBE, interim Chair of Ofqual from January 2021, said:

We are delighted to have secured Simon Lebus as interim Chief Regulator. Taken together these arrangements will ensure that Ofqual has the extra capacity, support and oversight it needs to make sure that next year's arrangements command public confidence, and to deliver its part in key qualification reform programmes.

Simon Lebus, interim Chief Regulator at Ofqual from January 2021, said:

I am pleased to have the opportunity to serve as Chief Regulator. I look forward to working with colleagues at Ofqual, its board, the DfE, awarding organisations and across the education and training sector to ensure a smooth-running exam series in 2021 and to tackle important longer-term issues such as technical and vocational qualification reform and supporting innovation in assessment.

Having spent 15 years of my career involved with public exams and qualifications, I have no doubt that Ofqual has an absolutely central role in ensuring the integrity, independence, fairness and quality of our assessment system and it will be a privilege to lead it in doing that.